



Congressman Gary Miller's CAPITOL CONNECTION

42ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

www.house.gov/garymiller

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Securing America's Seaports

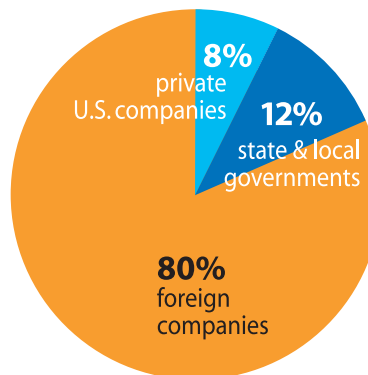
The attacks of September 11, 2001 forever changed America's sense of invulnerability from foreign acts of aggression. Since then, we have worked hard to combat and prevent terrorists from further jeopardizing America's security, particularly at our ports and borders. We have come a long way since 9/11. The federal government has increased funding for port security by more than 700 percent, deployed new security technologies and implemented a multilayered screening and inspection process on all cargo entering the United States. Facts about U.S. seaport operations:

Who Runs Security? The U.S. Coast Guard is in charge of port security, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection is in charge of cargo and container security. The Coast Guard patrols ports, inspects facilities and terminals, and collects information on incoming ships and the individuals on board. Customs agents inspect cargo containers once they reach U.S. ports and, many times, at foreign ports before ships have a chance to reach the United States.

Who Operates What? U.S. seaports are owned by local taxpayers and run by local governments. Port authorities issue leases to multiple companies to operate the terminals within the ports that load and unload cargo containers from ships. This includes storage and repair facilities and management offices. Terminal operators may use their own cranes or they may lease them from the port authority.

The potential acquisition of terminal operations by a Middle Eastern company has triggered renewed attention to how vulnerable our ports may still be to a terrorist attack. Since more than six million cargo containers enter U.S. seaports each year, the United States must absolutely ensure our ports do not become a target for terrorism or a conduit through which terrorists' weapons may enter our country.

There are about 15 major seaports in the United States; each is divided into a handful of separately operated terminals.
Who operates these terminals?



Reforming the Review Process

The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States was designed to evaluate the impact of foreign investments on our economy and national security at a time when encouraging foreign investment was the primary focus. Congressman Miller supports efforts to refocus this review process to more closely assess the national security implications of these foreign investments.

Closing the Loophole in Port Security

Current law requires each port terminal to designate an individual with extensive security experience to be the Facility Security Officer. However, the law does not require this official to be a U.S. citizen. Congressman Miller supports legislation to remove this security vulnerability by requiring every Facility Security Officer to be a U.S. citizen.


Strengthening the Coast Guard

The Coast Guard's ships and aircraft are rapidly deteriorating and need to be upgraded. Congress is finalizing legislation to provide more than \$284 million to replace the Coast Guard's vessels, expand the territory where they can patrol and establish a long-range satellite vessel tracking system. Congressman Miller supports giving the Coast Guard the necessary tools to carry out its mission of protecting our ports.

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Gary A. Miller

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News and Views from

Congressman Miller

A Layered Defense

Regardless of who operates a seaport terminal, all shipping containers must pass through several layers of security measures before entering the United States, including:

Pre-Departure Inspection: All cargo ships headed to the United States must submit information about its cargo and crew to the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection one day prior to departure. By the end of the year, 80 percent of the cargo entering the country will be inspected by U.S. authorities at foreign ports before it has a chance to reach our ports.

Pre-Arrival Inspection: Ninety-six hours before a cargo ship enters a U.S. port, the captain must submit a manifest of what the ship is carrying and information about the ship's crew and passengers.

Post Arrival Inspection: One hundred percent of all cargo containers entering the United States are screened for radiation and other harmful agents. Cargo deemed high-risk or from unstable areas of the world receive a full and thorough inspection. In addition, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection operates more than 600 canine units and 170 large scale x-ray machines.

"No longer can we take for granted that terrorism will never reach our soil. Together, we must put in place a security infrastructure that makes it impossible for those who wish us harm to carry out their evil plans."

-- Congressman Miller

Contact Congressman Gary Miller for more information, help with Federal agencies or other services.

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